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The
Volunteer
Dimension
in
EFNEP

Identifying Volunteers

LESSON 3

HELPING AIDES IDENTIFY VOLUNTEERS FROM EFNEP TARGET AUDIENCES

Purposes of Lesson

This section of lesson 3 may be used by county professional staff to help EFNEP aides—

- Accept volunteers as a part of the Extension team to assist in accomplishing EFNEP objectives.
- Recognize opportunities for the progression of homemakers into volunteer roles through use of the EFNEP “progression model.”
- Identify volunteers within the target community, such as:
 - Homemakers in EFNEP who have changed their food behavior patterns
 - Homemakers who have “graduated” from EFNEP and members of their families
 - Former aides and their families
 - Members of teen EFNEP groups
 - Low-income adults and teens not in EFNEP.

Acceptance Improves Identification

If the initial training for program aides did not include information about volunteers, it is understandable that aides might have some concerns when the idea of volunteers is introduced later.

It should be the professional Extension staff’s responsibility to encourage in aides more positive attitudes about volunteers. *The staff can develop current job descriptions that require aides to periodically select volunteers from—*

- program families, homemakers

- teen leaders or 4-H EFNEP leaders
- other groups.

Professionals can give recognition to aides for individual accomplishments in—

- Following ES-USDA guidelines
- Teaching nutrition to homemakers
- Identifying homemakers who have progressed enough to assist as EFNEP volunteers
- Identifying other volunteers from the indigenous audience or other sources
- Serving as “communication links” between volunteers and professional recruiters.

The professional staff can help aides understand the positive impact of volunteers on EFNEP. Aides need to see that the EFNEP volunteer program is designed to motivate helpers to assist in reaching EFNEP goals. Volunteers can often help solve or interpret problems that professionals and aides have had difficulty solving.

Finding Volunteers Among People With Limited Resources

Volunteer activity is not unknown in low-income communities. People with limited resources often donate time and energy to others in the neighborhood. This volunteering is usually done on a very personal basis and is referred to as “helping out” or “lending a hand.”

Volunteers from low socioeconomic, senior citizen, and minority or ethnic groups prefer, jobs that—

- Improve their immediate personal situations
- Are located in their own community
- Show concrete benefits
- Help people similar to themselves.

“Indigenous” volunteers (those like the people they work with) can play an important part in helping improve the diets of families and youth in low-income communities. Such volunteers have social backgrounds, attitudes, values, and language patterns similar to the EFNEP clientele. Where there is a foreign language barrier, volunteers who know the language are helpful.

Low-income volunteers have opportunities for personal growth and improved self-image, and the possibility of becoming “models” for their peer groups.

When EFNEP homemakers volunteer to reach new families, it reinforces their own learning, and helps stretch the EFNEP budget.

ACTIVITIES TO HELP AIDES IDENTIFY VOLUNTEERS

1. Assignments for Program Aides

Every 6 months or more often, schedule a “volunteer identification” work session for the aides.

Request that aides bring to the work session the following records for 10 or more of their families:

- *Food Behavior Checklist*
- *Family Records*
- *Food and Nutrition Progress Records*

Aides should select homemakers who are consistently progressing toward—or have

reached—the shaded area (90-100) at the top of the record, or homemakers who have graduated from EFNEP.

2. Preparation for Extension Agent (Supervisor-Instructor)

Have available these items:

- Copies of aide’s worksheet: *Points to Help Select Volunteers from Program Families* (in this lesson). Include *three* copies of the *Homemaker’s Rating* sheet.
- A list of jobs volunteers can do in EFNEP. This list may have been developed in a previous lesson or prepared by the professional. (See Lesson 2).

3. Activities for Work Session

Using the *Food and Nutrition Progress Records* and *Family Records*, each aide should fill in the aide’s worksheet—*Points to Help Select Volunteers from Program Families*.

4. Future Plans—Assignments

Information compiled about the potential recruits from the target audience should be summarized for use in a followup lesson on “recruiting volunteers.”

Arrange one or more sessions for aides to observe effective EFNEP volunteers in action.



POINTS TO HELP SELECT VOLUNTEERS FROM PROGRAM FAMILIES

1. Homemakers or family members who are most eager to learn and do new things are:
2. Homemakers or family members who have shared something you have taught them with neighbors and friends are:
3. Families whose members belong to and are active in one or more clubs or community groups are:
4. Families who have adult visitors in their homes often are:
5. Families who have youth visit in their homes often are:
6. Families whose members have said they wish they could be with people more often are:
7. Adults who wish their children had more worthwhile activities are:
8. Families who show tolerance for people who are different from themselves are:
9. Families whose members help other people in the neighborhood are:
10. Families who have adopted nutritional behavior changes are:
11. Look over your answers in questions 1 through 10. Did any homemaker's name show up in two or more answers? Select the *three homemakers* whose names appear the most times. Using three copies of the "Homemaker's Rating" chart, rate each of these three homemakers as to *high, medium, or low level of leadership* in food and nutrition skills and other factors. To help do this rating, refer to that homemaker's "Food Behavior Checklist" from the *Progression Model*, and to *Volunteers--A Challenge for Extension Workers*.

12. Select the *one* homemaker that you rated highest on the “Homemaker’s Rating” charts, and answer the following questions about that homemaker:

- Why might the person want to volunteer?
- What conditions or obstacles might keep the person from volunteering?
- What can be done to eliminate the barriers you wrote down?
- What jobs might this person do as a volunteer in EFNEP?
- How will you approach this person to see if she or he is interested in being a volunteer?

Name of Aide: _____

Name of Supervisor: _____



HOMEMAKER'S RATING

Name of homemaker _____

Address _____

Telephone: _____

HOMEMAKER'S FOOD AND NUTRITION SKILLS

	High	Medium	Low
a. Understands basic four food groups			
b. Plans balanced meals			
c. Food shopping ability			
d. Food preparation and cooking			
e. Use of economical foods, substitutes			

OTHER FACTORS OR SKILLS

	High	Medium	Low
a. Able to cope with problems			
b. Feeds children, though not always on schedule			
c. Money and resource management related to food			
d. Finds it easy to communicate with people			
e. If eligible, uses food stamps wisely			

HOW THE PROFESSIONAL CAN IDENTIFY VOLUNTEERS OUTSIDE THE EFNEP TARGET AUDIENCE

This section can be used by the professional responsible for the EFNEP volunteer program to identify potential volunteers from outside the low-income EFNEP audience. Volunteers may be recruited from a variety of people in many walks of life.

In each community there are potential volunteers who have the time and the desire to serve others.

Extension workers can learn to identify recruits for a specific volunteer job by using a good job description and matching the qualifications of the recruit with the requirements of the job.

The selection of volunteers depends upon the need and the specific jobs to be done. It is important to consider short-term versus long-term commitment for volunteers who are busy people.

Sources of Volunteers

Add your own ideas on local "volunteer resources" to the following suggestions.

The Extension "family" (advisory councils, homemaker club members, 4-H members, and junior or adult leaders).

High school and college students. Schools may give course credit for volunteer work. Teenage leaders usually make dedicated teachers.

Former Peace Corps workers, ACTION volunteers. These people have already demonstrated a commitment to service.

Retired professionals, senior citizens, or the handicapped. These want to feel needed and have expertise to offer.

Members of organized groups or clubs

- Employment services
- Recreation centers
- Private agencies
- Sports, civic, fraternal clubs
- Businesses.

Members of neighborhood churches, synagogues, or temples may be willing volunteers. Sometimes a local minister or priest may

be the community leader who serves as a "gatekeeper" for a neighborhood. His influence and approval are well known.

Professional and technical people.

Teachers, nurses, social workers, medical personnel and others may be willing to give extra time at nights or on weekends.

"Released time" volunteers. Workers and staff who receive "time off" from their jobs may be willing to help with community projects.

Lesson: Matching Identified Volunteers With the Job

1. Advance assignment for class participants.

Assuming you have three well-trained volunteers available 3 hours a week on a regular basis to help improve the effectiveness of EFNEP in your county. . .

(a) What are the three most *urgent needs* or high priority jobs in the program for the next 3 months?

(b) Be prepared to rate the three jobs selected (in "a" above) as requiring *high, medium, or low* levels of leadership. Participants should bring answers to class. Reference: *Volunteers—A Challenge for Extension Workers*, (ES-USDA) 1971, pp. 6-7.

2. In Class.

Have available for reference the list of jobs compiled in Lesson 2.

Have participants complete worksheet on *Naming Volunteers* (at end of this lesson).

Make visual on a chalkboard or flipchart using—

(a) The list of priority jobs in EFNEP (from participants' advance assignment).

(b) Participants' rating of each job as requiring a *low, medium or high* level of leadership.

Have each person develop a job description for three jobs that will use their volunteers selected from outside the target low-income audience. (They should select jobs that involve *high, medium, and low* levels of leadership). Use the worksheet "Job Description for EFNEP Volunteers" at end of Lesson 2, *Matching Jobs with Volunteers*). Participants may outline job descriptions to fit their special needs.



(Worksheet for professionals or experienced volunteers)

NAMING VOLUNTEERS

Who. . .

1. Would accept a volunteer job because I asked him to?

2. Likes to meet people and make friends?

3. Likes to be a part of a group?

4. Likes to spend 2 or 3 hours a week away from his or her regular routine?

5. Sees a need for food and nutrition education?

6. Wants an opportunity for more learning in food and nutrition?

7. Likes to help others?

8. Would be willing to share responsibility with a group?

9. Appears to have some influence with teens?

10. Appears to have some influence with pre-teen youth?

11. Appears to have influence with adults?

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